GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:179
ANSWERED ON:09.03.2016
Agreements among SAARC Nations
Senthilnathan Shri PR.;Solanki Dr. Kirit Premjibhai

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has signed mutual cooperation treaty with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) nations on criminal matters, if so, the details in this regard;

(b) whether the Government also proposes to raise a common disaster response force on the lines of UN peacekeeping force for specialized response to national and man-made disaster in collaboration with SAARC member countries and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India has also constituted Joint Working Groups (JWGs) among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) for co-operation on various issues and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of negotiations held/treaties signed on all the aforesaid matters along with the benefits likely to accrue to India as a result thereof ?

Answer

THE MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 179 ON 'AGREEMENT AMONG SAARC NATIONS' FOR ANSWER ON 09.03.2016

The SAARC Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters was signed at Colombo, Sri Lanka on 3rd August, 2008 during the 15th SAARC Summit.

2. Mutual assistance to be rendered under the said Convention shall, inter alia, include (i) locating and identifying persons and objects (ii) service of judicial documents (iii) search and seizure (iv) taking evidence and obtaining statements (v) facilitating appearance of witnesses or assistance of persons in investigations (vi) making detained persons available to give evidence or assist investigations (vii) taking measures to locate, restrain or forfeit the proceeds and instruments of crime (viii) taking measures to locate, freeze and confiscate funds or finances meant for the financing of all criminal acts in the territory of either State Party (ix) any other assistance consistent with the objectives of the Convention and the laws of the requested State Party, as may be mutually agreed upon.

3. India has ratified the said Convention on 29th August, 2008. The Convention is yet to come into force as some Member States of SAARC have not ratified it so far.

4. Concerned at the increasing frequency and scale of natural disasters in the South Asian region and their damaging impacts both short-term and long-term, the SAARC Agreement on Rapid Response to Natural Disasters was signed during the 17th SAARC Summit held in Addu City, Maldives on 11th November, 2011 with the objective to provide effective regional mechanism for rapid response to disasters. There is no proposal under consideration of the Government of India to raise a common disaster response force in collaboration with SAARC nations.

5. Joint Working Groups on Sub-Regional Cooperation between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) on Water Resources Management and Power/Hydropower, connectivity and transit have been constituted to harness advantages of regional and sub-regional cooperation in power, water resources, transport and other forms of connectivity.